

New-York Daily Tribune

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 1864.

TRIPLE SHEET.

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NEWS OF THE DAY.

THE WAR.

Western dispatches are muddy as regards Sherman's movements, and little reliance can be placed upon their assertions. The most direct news is by an officer who arrived at Cairo yesterday from Vicksburg the 18th ult., bearing dispatches from Gen. Sherman. When twelve miles east of Meridian, on the 11th, he says the enemy numbered only 7,000 or 8,000, and were much demoralized. No fighting had occurred after passing Jackson, Miss. When Gen. Sherman was twelve miles west of Meridian, on the 11th ult., he sent part of his forces to Selma. Official news settles the question as to Gen. Sherman's occupation of Selma. The railroad between Jackson and Meridian has been totally destroyed. The latest advice is that part of Sherman's forces are still at Selma, and the remainder have fallen back to Meridian. Per Contra—A dispatch to Philadelphia from Washington, says: "Intelligence has been received here that Gen. Sherman has been extended reconnaissance. He did not go near Selma and never intended such a thing." The Memphis Bulletin of the 26th says: "We have intelligence, the correctness of which we can vouch for, that last Sunday week, at noon, Gen. Sherman entered Meridian with but little opposition. He hurriedly retreated before him from the city of Meridian. Still further: A dispatch from Cairo states that when the steamer Mississippi on her way up arrived at Vicksburg, a gentleman, formerly Captain of the steamboat Scotland, just came in from Mobile, having escaped from the Rebels, into whose army he had been conscripted, reported that when he left Mobile, Gen. Sherman was within fifty miles of that place, and could easily take it if he wanted to. Our own special advisers by way of Washington say that after reaching Meridian, Sherman waited to hear from Smith's Cavalry; no news came for three days; he had a short allowance of provisions; by a rapid march he turned Aberdeen and Columbus, in the richest part of Eastern Mississippi, where his army was sure to find an abundance of provisions. By this he turned his back upon Selma and Mobile, marched toward Logun, who had advanced to meet him, and by an audacious stroke of strategy, placed himself at a distance of one hundred miles from Johnston's flank, now menaced by his advance. The dispatch says that the rumor spread concerning the attack upon Mobile and Selma by Sherman was simply meant to divert public attention from the real object of the expedition, which aims at an invasion of Georgia somewhere between Trenton and Lafayette.

Yesterday morning the President received a dispatch from Gen. Butler, stating that Gen. Kilpatrick arrived within the Union lines (place not stated) on Thursday. His loss was said to be less than 150. Col. Dahlgren, Cook, and Liffield are missing—the first two supposed to be prisoners. Gen. Kilpatrick destroyed a large portion of the Virginia Central Railroad, and several miles along the James River. He penetrated to the outer fortifications of Richmond. By way of Norfolk we learn that rumors were current among Rebel sympathizers of a great scare in Richmond, and some professed to know that the inhabitants were clearing out.

On Tuesday evening there was some fighting at Deep Creek, ten miles from New-York, but to what extent was not known. Next day the Norfolks heard continuous and heavy artillery firing in that direction, but nothing definite had been received at headquarters when the dispatch left. The Rebels are getting troublesome along the Albemarle Canal, and in the Diamond Swamp.

The small side-wheel steamer Scotia was captured by the Connecticut on the 1st inst., having run out from Wilmington on the night of the 29th. She has 108 bales of cotton on board. The Scotia is a paddle-wheel steamer, about 300 tons burden, was built on the Clyde, and was purchased and sent out from Glasgow in the summer of 1863.

CONGRESS.

SENATE, March 4.—Mr. Sherman from the Committee of Conference on the disagreeing vote of the two Houses on the Revenue bill, reported that the Committee of the Senate was unable to agree with that of the House. He moved that the Senate recede from amendments disagreed to by the House, which motion was adopted, by Yeas 55; Nays 11. The bill as it now stands provides a tax of 50 cents on all domestic liquors manufactured or removed for sale after the passage of the act July 1, 1864, and 40 cents on imported spirits on hand. The bill for an additional classified Census of certain portions of the country, was referred to the Finance Committee. Mr. Powell then finished his long speech, and the Senate adjourned to Monday.

HOUSE.—A bill to establish mails to Brazil was offered and referred. Private bills occupied most of the session. The Committee on Revolutionary Pensions reported a resolution, which was unanimously adopted, tendering thanks to the surviving Revolutionary soldiers, twelve in number, and sincerely rejoicing that by the decree of Providence, their lives have been protected beyond the period allotted to man. Copies of this resolution are to be sent by the Speaker to each of the Revolutionary pensioners. The contested seat in the 11th District of Massachusetts was settled by denying the claim of Mr. Sleeper. Mr. Rice, acting member, was confirmed by a unanimous vote. Adjourned.

LEGISLATURE.

SENATE, March 4.—Bills were reported favorably to make Washington's Birthday a legal holiday, for the erection of a Court to investigate claims against the State, to incorporate the Germania Society of Brooklyn, New-York; incorporating the Grand Hotel Company, incorporating the Brooklyn Market Company for the transportation of passengers and freight in New-York; relative to legal proceedings against the authorities of New-York. The bill enabling prison convicts to work in commutation of sentence was lost, and the motion to reconsider tabled. The bill to continue the improvement of the Hudson River was debated until the hour of adjournment.

ASSEMBLY.—Reports were made to regulate the sale of drugs and medicines (agreed to); authorizing the Second Avenue Railroad to extend their tracks; to incorporate the Young Bachelors' Club of New-York. The third reading of bills was proceeded with. Mr. Blaisdell moved to recommit the Appropriation bill, with the view of restoring the appropriation to the National Guard. His motion was lost.

GENERAL NEWS.

An explosion happened in the laboratory of the military magazine at Quebec yesterday. The building was destroyed, and others were much shaken. Ten or more persons are missing, and are probably killed. Three or four bodies have been found.

Miss Emma Webb, one of the actresses known as "The Webb Sisters," formerly of the Bowery stage, appeared last night in a political cartoon, in an effort to answer the Union speeches of Miss Dickinson.

Miss Webb appeared at the Brooklyn Athenaeum, before a fair audience as to numbers. Being accustomed to speak in public, she had no difficulty in delivering a very strong Copperhead speech, prepared for her by the leaders of the Peace Democracy.

It appears from a letter of the Commissioner of Pensions that only twelve of the Revolutionary soldiers are now living, whose ages range from 94 to 105 years, and whose pensions only amount to from \$4 to \$50 per annum.

The President having approved and signed the bill amending the Loan act of 1863, and the joint resolution extending payment of bounties to the last of April, they have become laws.

The Reed House, Erie, Pa., was burned yesterday. The loss, including other property, is put down at \$200,000.

The Rev. Thomas Starr King died yesterday morning at San Francisco of diphtheria.

Secretary Seward is said to be confined to his home by an attack of pneumonia.

The Gold market is higher, closing at 161½ after selling at 160½. Upon the street stocks were strong with the exception of Erie. The stock market has been much excited throughout the day and closes at a substantial advance upon the general list. In some cases the rise has been 10 per cent. Federal Stocks, State Bonds, and Railway Mortgages are all firm, and only offered in small amounts. Money is abundant at 5½ per cent, and more offered on call at this rate than can be used.

At the recent Indiana State Convention the delegates from the Ninth District passed resolutions unanimously congratulating their representative, Mr. Celfax, on his election to the Speakership, and insisting that he should consent to accept another nomination to Congress.

On the third page to-day we give notices of the "Auto-Biography of Lyman Beecher" and other books, with several letters from Europe. On the fourth page, letters from Matamoros, Knoxville, Washington, and Constantinople, and an account of the Border-State Convention at Louisville. The ninth and tenth pages contain the important memorial of the Chamber of Commerce on Ocean Steam Navigation.

By an advertisement in another column it will be seen that the Assessors of Internal Revenue for this City and Brooklyn are prepared to receive returns for the Annual Taxes for the year 1864. The law provides that those persons, firms, and corporations who are subject to an annual tax for income, license, carriages, silver plate, &c., shall present their returns or lists to the Assistant Assessor on or before the first Monday in May of each year, and in default thereof they are subject to assessment for the full amount of such taxes, with 50 per cent added thereto. Tax-payers will therefore see that their own interests, at least, dictate promptness in making their returns.

The letter from our London correspondent, which we publish this morning, contains some further intelligence as to the proposed escape of Messrs. Mason, Sillid & Co. A paragraph has been set afloat in the English newspapers that an expedition, under British auspices, was about to start in search of the Alabama; but it was presumed to be a blind merely for the plan of the refugees to run the blockade and cheat their fellow-Rebels on this side of a few hundred thousand dollars worth of cotton. If the premature exposure of this expedition does not defeat it, some lucky capture may yet have the good fortune to return Messrs. Mason and Sillid to their old lodgings in Fort Warren. It is to be hoped that no timely warning shall reach those double traitors at Bermuda.

A WORD WITH CONGRESS.

As we feared, all along, the Whisky-gamblers have cornered the Treasury, and pocketed some Five Millions that ought to have gone to mitigate the fearfully rapid increase of our National Debt. Their triumph exhibits Congress in the most awkward predicament possible; for the only plausible objection to taxing Liquor on hand was the alleged bad faith of taxing a second time articles which have once paid the full rate imposed on them by law. But the holders of Foreign Liquors not being in the speculators' "ring," the new bill imposes forty cents per gallon on all imported liquors on hand, while letting all of domestic production go free. [This will enable most of our French Brandy and Holland or Old London Dock Gin to go scot-free.] Thus the assumption that there is bad faith in retaxing liquors that have once paid duty or excise is abandoned or overborne; and the action of Congress resolves itself into a naked legislation of several millions into the pockets of a favored few, who have speculated in Whisky on the presumption that Congress must increase the tax on Liquors and would not tax stocks on hand, thus insuring a very large profit to the holders of those stocks.

Gentlemen in Congress scold the idea of any imputation that their votes on this subject have been swayed by pecuniary inducements. Let us look at the facts: When the bill was originally under consideration, the House, on motion of Fernando Wood, voted, by fully two to one, to impose a tax on Liquors on hand. No petitions had been presented, no newspapers had then spoken, on the subject. If that was not an unbiased and free expression of the judgment of that body, we know not how such expression could have been had. Thus the bill went to the Senate; and at once the agents of the Whisky monopolists began to flock to Washington. Any member who does not know that there were there in great force, numerical and otherwise, may easily be convinced if he will but inquire. Soon the Finance Committee of the Senate surprised and pained us by reporting in accordance with the wishes and interest of the speculators; and in due time the Senate concurred in that report. Thus the bill was sent back to the House, when some fourteen members changed their votes from the side of the Treasury to that of the monopolists, and it was clear that the latter were to win. And now they have won, at the expense of the consistency of Congress and the interest of the Nation. Who believes that the subservient Members have given all this immense sum to the Whisky-gamblers and kept nothing for themselves? We do not. And now we beg Congress to remember that three months of the Session have passed to little purpose, and that the Republic is in the crisis of a desperate struggle for existence. Is it not possible that the business of the Session shall be

pushed forward a little faster? There must be more and heavier taxes levied: we trust the rates now charged on imported Silks, Wines, and all other articles of luxury, will at least be doubled, and that right speedily. And wherever a tax can be imposed or increased without paralyzing our industry, embarrassing the diffusion of intelligence, or increasing the burdens of the poor, there a tax should be laid or augmented.

The House, for a wonder, has at last attained a perfect unanimity. It voted last Monday—no one dissenting—that the Rebellion should be put down and its cause eradicated. That is exactly right. Let not the unanimity be marred by attempts at nicety of definition; but stop just where we are. Is it not true that the House had done for the Session with Buncome resolutions?

One point more: It has pleased Congress to decree the appointment of a Lieutenant-General; and the President, with the entire assent of both Houses, has selected ULYSSES S. GRANT for the most responsible position.

We had nothing to say, pro or con, while this matter was in progress; we neither urged the creation of a Lieutenant-Generalship, nor recommended Gen. Grant for the position. But, now that the work is done, we most respectfully suggest that the conduct of the War, under the President, be committed absolutely to the Lieutenant-General, and that we all—Congress, Cabinet, and the Press—Republicans and Democrats, Conservatives and Radicals—take hold and strengthen his hands for the immense responsibility devolved upon him. Let him not be impeded nor embarrassed in his work either by speeches or articles, advice or criticism, until we shall have given him a fair trial. If he proves a do-nothing, a hang-back, a mistake, let us in due time unite to get rid of him; but first let him have a fair chance to prove that he is the man for his work. Let him not be condemned for one miscarriage, if there shall be one, but generously trusted and sustained until he shall have decisively shown that he can or cannot put down the Rebellion. Then let us act as the good of the Nation shall dictate; but, until then, let us remember in his behalf Stonewall Jackson's message to his superior: "Send me more men and fewer orders."

OCEAN STEAM NAVIGATION.

We call the attention of our readers to the memorial of the Chamber of Commerce of New-York to Congress on the subject of Ocean Steam Navigation, which we print to-day, from a digest prepared for our columns by its compiler, the Secretary of the Chamber.

We see by The Washington Globe of the 2d inst. that this important paper was submitted to the House of Representatives on the 19th ult. by the Hon. Henry G. Stebbins, and referred to the Committee of Commerce under the rules.

The subject of which this memorial treats is one of the most important that can occupy the attention of our Legislators or of our people. It involves the grave question of our maritime supremacy—perhaps of our existence as a maritime nation. Steam is gradually taking the place of all other motors, and will ultimately assume to itself the carrying trade of the ocean as entirely as it has already monopolized the carriage of freight and passengers between distant points on land. The question is, therefore, simply whether we shall abandon the ocean to our commercial rivals and pay a tribute to their prosperity by the employment of their tonnage, or whether we shall seriously undertake the extension of our steam tonnage. It is a melancholy fact, which should cause the cheek of every New-York merchant to blush with shame, that the United States has not even a single steamer on the Atlantic Ocean, while 54 first-class steamers, of a tonnage ranging from 1,500 to 4,000 tons each, and of a total tonnage of over 100,000 tons, enjoy the profits of the freight and passenger trade of the Atlantic. Last year 170 arrivals of steamers landed at this port 63,931 passengers from European ports. Even the famous Adriatic, the marvel of naval architecture and the boast of American mechanical art, has been sold to a foreign owner, and crosses the ocean under a foreign flag.

These reflections are not agreeable, and the inquiry at once arises as to the cause. It is to be found in the fact that the Foreign lines have grown up under a sagacious policy of government subsidies, by which they have been created and steadily sustained.

The advantages to the United States of maintaining its flag in every port and on every sea are not to be measured by dollars and cents alone. Our steamers should carry to every nation the glad tidings of our institutions and of our prosperity, and bear their own witness to our commercial grandeur.

Great national interests are also involved in the establishment of rapid and constant steam communication with our American neighbors. The European Governments are all seeking to establish their influence and their policy on this continent. The fall of Mexico to-day may be that of Brazil to-morrow. Pretensions will not be wanting to the unscrupulous ambition of European rulers. The great struggle of the world is in the future, and will be continental in character.

To prepare for this possible contest and to secure its favorable result, we must increase our influence with future allies. Natives of America must not be found with a divided front. We need a constant steam communication with them all. We must establish that propinquity which the efforts of European policy have destroyed. We must not permit the foreigner by the exclusive use of steam to neutralize our advantage.

A line to Point Isabel will restore our commercial relations with Mexico, and when peace is restored, prove the initial movement in a series of enterprises which will connect the Atlantic with the west coast of Mexico.

A line to Rio with branches to other important points will develop the influence of the United States in that important section. Markets now closed will be reopened to our commerce. Our manufacturers now almost unknown will be sought after with avidity, and a more creditable balance of trade be established. The anomaly

will no longer be witnessed of Great Britain exporting to Brazil twenty-two millions of dollars of value in merchandise and taking from it, in return, only eleven millions, while the United States exports to it only six millions, yet consumes of Brazil product over twenty-one millions. We shall put a stop to this purchasing of Brazil goods in Brazil markets upon British credits.

The memorial proposes a line of not less importance, to connect China with the Pacific Coast, California and Oregon demand this of the United States. They ask with justice, that while their full energies are turned to the drawing from the river bottoms and mountain sides, the metals which are the precious pivots on which the mechanism of commerce depend, commerce shall in return do something for their prosperity and comfort.

There are grave reasons of a general character why commercial enterprises should be fostered by Government at the present time. The great burden which the Rebellion has imposed upon us will weigh heavily upon us unless all our resources are developed. The national currency is expanded; its value is maintained in great measure by the heavy Government demand for money. As this Government demand ceases with the gradual decline in the extent of military operations, the inflation will be felt. The value of the currency will depreciate—prices will advance. But if the demands of commerce and mechanical industry are made to increase as that of Government diminishes, the ratio of currency to other values will be preserved, and the most difficult of questions receive a satisfactory solution.

One reflection more and we close: What an evidence of our power will the American flag, flying from the masthead of American steamers, carry to foreign nations! They will see with wonder a nation engaged in the greatest war in history enter anew the struggle for maritime supremacy and snatch from the Great Powers the prize most eagerly coveted, the carrying trade of the world. Foreign governments will hesitate to quarrel with a people which gives such proofs of its elasticity and strength, and the nations of the world will again seek to imitate the institutions and adopt the form of government under which such things are possible.

We commend this subject to the study especially of our merchants, and to the consideration of the honorable bodies to which this serious and wise memorial is addressed.

REBEL TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

Col. STREIGHT has submitted to the House Military Committee an account of his experience as a prisoner in Richmond, supplying more evidence—if any more were needed—of Rebel cruelty and bad faith. He surrendered himself and his command to the Rebel Gen. Forrest, under written stipulations that each regiment should retain its colors, the officers their side-arms, and both officers and men their haversacks, knapsacks, blankets, and private property of every description. These terms were in a measure respected by Gen. Forrest, but as soon as the prisoners were turned over to the Rebel authorities, every agreement was violated, and all their property plundered. When Col. Streight remonstrated, Gen. Winder, the commandant of prisoners in Richmond, compelled him to surrender the agreement signed by Gen. Forrest, and still retains it.

The history of the treatment of these prisoners is similar to what has repeatedly been written. They were confined in a room entirely unfurnished, with open windows the winter through, and without blankets, and were expected to subsist on one pound of corn bread and one-quarter of a pound of poor fresh meat a day. The meat was allowed about half the time. Col. Streight frequently visited the hospital, and was told by large numbers of dying men that they had been compelled to lie out in the open air without any medical attendance for days after they were unable to walk. In no instance did the Rebel authorities furnish clothing or blankets, and for the want of them many were frozen to death during the winter. Col. Streight was confined for three weeks in an underground cell, in the most horrible condition, kept in iron, and fed on bread and water—punishment for an attempted escape.

This is the testimony, beyond question correct, of an honorable officer who speaks of what he has seen and felt—a calm, deliberate statement. By help of it, and of the many which have preceded it, and which will follow it, we may judge what a savage enemy we are fighting, and what prospect there is of "reconciliation" on any terms but those of conquest. It is "an inhuman people with whom we are at war," says Col. Streight. "They seem lost to every principle of humanity, and it is my candid conviction that their brutality to our prisoners is only measured by their fears."

MR. MICHAEL HAHN.

Mr. MICHAEL HAHN, whose election as Governor of Louisiana, was announced yesterday, was strenuously opposed by the Free-State men from the well-known fact that he was, earlier in the war, in hearty sympathy with the Secessionists. On the 29th of May, 1861, he was selected by several ladies of New-Orleans to present, on their behalf, a stand of colors to the Calhoun Guards—a company of Rebel soldiers. Of his speech, on that occasion, The N. O. Crescent of that date says: "In eloquent terms he referred to the influence of the fair sex, as mothers, over the destiny of men, as well as the influence which tokens of this kind must necessarily have upon men fighting for their rights, homes and firesides. Quoting history, and applying its teachings to the present hour, he concluded amid rapturous applause."

After the passage of the ordinance of Secession the Legislature of the State passed an act authorizing Governor Moore, the Rebel Governor, to appoint three public notaries. Mr. Hahn received an appointment under this act, and took an oath of allegiance to the usurping Government. When New-Orleans was taken by the Union forces, however, he avowed his loyalty, and took the oath prescribed by Congress, wherein he swore that he had never "voluntarily given aid, countenance, counsel or encouragement to persons in arms against the United States."

There was a heavy snow storm yesterday, but the weather is again pleasant.

States, nor sought, nor accepted, nor attempted to exercise the functions of any office under any authority, or pretended authority, in hostility to the United States." The Free States men, it seems, hesitated to give their confidence to a man who took such an oath, under such circumstances, in contradiction to the notorious facts in the case.

It is understood that Mr. Hahn was the candidate most acceptable to Gen. Banks, and this could hardly have failed to exercise some influence upon the election. But as Mr. Hahn was, beyond dispute, an outspoken Secessionist and a Rebel office-holder up to the time that Gen. Butler assumed command at New-Orleans, and is asserted by the Free-State men to be opposed to the abolition of Slavery in Louisiana, it is to be presumed that Gen. Banks has good reason to be satisfied of his loyalty now, and is perfectly assured that his official conduct will be in accordance with the policy of the Government. He could not otherwise, of course, have given his countenance and support to one whose record was so suspicious. To suppose the contrary is to assume that Gen. Banks is more easily deceived than has hitherto been thought possible in so astute a politician, or else to presume that some other end was to be gained by Mr. Hahn's election than is openly apparent. Neither proposition is, of course, admissible. We can only, therefore, fall back upon the supposition that the Governor elect, notwithstanding his questionable antecedents, is precisely the man to restore Louisiana to the Union, and that Gen. Banks is satisfied that a work so important, and requiring a character of the sternest loyalty and the strictest honor, may be safely intrusted to Mr. Hahn. Mr. Flanders, the Free State candidate, had endeavored himself to those who sought to make him Governor by the common bond of suffering for the Union's sake, and it was natural they should seek to make him their Chief Magistrate, on whose loyalty there has never been the slightest shadow of suspicion. It is to be hoped that the future course of Gov. Hahn will entitle him to that confidence and respect from the Free States men which Mr. Flanders had earned in more trying times. Indeed it must be so, or the future has only new troubles in store for Louisiana.

NEW-YORK STATE LEGISLATURE.
 SENATE.—ALBANY, March 4, 1864.
 EVENING SESSION.

A concurrent resolution appropriating \$25,000 for the reception of returning regiments of volunteers was adopted.

Mr. OSWALD introduced a concurrent resolution that our representatives in Congress be instructed to vote for a 50 per cent increase of pay to men in the military and naval service, which lies over.

The majority of the Committee on Cities have reported to prefer in favor of increasing the pay of New-York Policemen as follows: Captains, \$14; Sergeants, \$10.50; Patrolmen, \$9; and Doormen, \$8. Adjourned.

ASSEMBLY.
 EVENING SESSION.
 BILLS PASSED.

The Annual Appropriation bill was passed. Also a bill limiting the term of office of Notaries Public.

The bill repealing the law exempting clergymen's property from taxation was lost, and a motion to reconsider was tabled.

BILLS INTRODUCED.
 By Mr. FINCKLEY.—To provide an army for the 8th Regiment of the National Guard. The bill names Joshua M. Varian, John W. Arrey and John M. Hayward Commissioners to purchase lands and erect an armory, at a cost not to exceed \$300,000, to be raised by a loan of \$100,000.

By Mr. GRASMAN.—Requiring the Clerks of Police Courts and Court of Special Sessions, in New-York, to keep an alphabetical record of all cases transpiring in said Courts.

By Mr. ECKHART.—Confirming and declaring the final proceedings of Supervisors relative to the New-York City claims, and directing the Controller to pay all claims allowed by said Board.

By Mr. ECKHART.—Incorporating the Free Masons' and Odd-Fellows' Savings Bank of New-York.

By Mr. BURNETT.—For a railroad from the junction of Broadway and Grand street to Grand street Ferry, Corporation as follows: John M. Finckley, James E. Coulter, William P. Angell, George Terwilliger, Jacob S. Brewer, William D. Veeder, John Scott, John J. Duran, W. L. Ely, John Bradburn and W. H. Thompson.

By Mr. BURNETT.—For a railroad from Broadway and Fifth avenue to the South River, and to the New-York City Corporation as follows: Thomas Welch, John Morrissey, Hugh O'Brien, Barney Hughes, Michael Daley, John Madden, James McAlister, Richard McNab, and Patrick Walsh.

By Mr. J. I. SMITH.—Incorporating Henry W. Smith, W. R. Anthony, H. B. Lord, and their associates, under the title of Corn Exchange Warehouse and Security Company, with a capital not to exceed one million.

By Mr. CURTIS.—Amending the act incorporating the Company for the safe-keeping of valuables in New-York. It permits an increase of capital to \$1,000,000, and makes the charter of the Company perpetual.

A resolution was introduced by Mr. RANKIN that the Canal Board report upon the propriety of and a plan for enlarging the Erie and Oswego Canals.

From West Virginia.
 HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF WEST VIRGINIA,
 Friday, March 4, 1864.

Refugees report heavy movements of Rebel troops eastward on the line of the Virginia and Tennessee railroad.

A portion of Early's command is reported as having gone toward Lynchburg.

Our active scouts and sufficient number of guerrillas moving in the mountains to give them constant employment in foraging their outfit.

Capt. Finckharter, who was captured with Gen. Seamon, was killed by our own men while in the hands of a band of guerrillas.

From Fort Smith.
 SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE UNION CLIPPING, MARCH 4, 1864.

A guerrilla band of about 75 men attacked Black's Mill, near Cross Hollow, 35 miles north of Fayetteville, a few days since. The mill was defended by a sergeant and 17 men, who repulsed the Rebels, killing three and wounding several more. Maj. Fitch, with 125 men, from Fayetteville, pursued and scattered them in all directions.

The following order has been sent to the commanding officer at Fayetteville:

"HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT OF THE FRONTIER,
 DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS,
 'FORT SMITH, Ark., Feb. 24, 1864.
 "Hang or shoot every guerrilla caught in the vicinity, when the male is captured or the wife killed."
 "The dispatch from here on the 12th ult., denying the neglect shown Gen. Curtis on his arrival, was sent by some meddlesome body, and not by your special courier."

Capt. Ross of Col. Clark's 9th Missouri (Rebel) Infantry has been taken from Fry's army and arrived at Van Buren with twelve of his men.

Gen. Frost has absconded from the Rebel army and gone to Mexico. Gen. Drayton commands his old brigade. There is no confirmation of the rumor that Price had left the Rebel ranks.

The river is on a big bend, the banks full, and over four feet on all the bars. The rise is only temporary.

The body of a man, shot through the head, was found three miles from town, yesterday. From a pass found in his pocket, his name appeared to be Wm. Collins.

In Little Rock Gen. Hunt and staff are expected daily. There will probably be a conflict of authority between Hunt and Thayer as to the command. Under the recent orders from Gen. Steele all the troops in the district have been placed in charge of Gen. Thayer. If the order is carried out Hunt will be a General without any troops.

Gen. Stockton, Treasury Agent, is busily engaged in securing about \$100,000 and there is every prospect of the raising of large crops.

There was a heavy snow storm yesterday, but the weather is again pleasant.

From California.
 SAN FRANCISCO, Friday, March 4, 1864.

The ship William Chamberlain has arrived from New-York.

The dry weather has induced considerable speculation in breadstuffs. Offerings made at \$1.90 and \$2.00 per 100 lbs. for wheat.

The sudden and unexpected death of the Rev. Thomas Starr King (long since in declining years) has shocked the whole community. Business was nearly suspended. The Courts adjourned, the public offices closed, and the flags on every flag-staff were put at half-mast, including those on the churches. It is understood that the cause of death was so much as he toward making California loyal, while his untiring zeal in forwarding every benevolent enterprise made him generally beloved.

From St. Louis.
 ST. LOUIS, Friday, March 4, 1864.

The Legislature of Colorado and many of the leading men of that Territory have petitioned Gen. Curtis to remove the seat of Government from Colorado to Gen. Kew, who has been assigned to that district. The Legislature of Kansas adjourned on the 1st inst. Meetings continue to be held in different parts of the State denouncing the late Senatorial election.

Quiet Reported at Chattanooga.
 NASHVILLE, Thursday, March 4, 1864.

All is reported quiet at the front.

The Presidential Question—Letter from the Hon. John Sherman.

To the Editor of The Cincinnati Gazette.
 Sir: The letter of your correspondent "J. J. M." in The Gazette of the 25th inst. enables me to state my agency in the distribution of a pamphlet headed "The Next Presidential Election."

A number of copies of this pamphlet were sent to my room either by Gen. Curtis or by the faithful hands of my frunk in ignorance of its contents. They came folded and sealed in the usual way of speeches and other documents, and were distributed by a clerk on the supposition that they were quite a different document.

As to the "Pamphlet Circular," there is but one assertion in it that I do not believe to be true, and that is the first. I have no doubt but Mr. Lincoln will be elected if nominated. If the circular had been openly published and circulated as an appeal to the people in behalf of Gov. Chase, it would have been entirely justified.

I did not know of its existence until published. I do not believe in secret circulars. As an open appeal to the judgment of the people, I would not have hesitated to have franked and circulated it, even though I did not approve of all its contents.

I prefer the nomination of Chase, as more executive ability than Mr. Lincoln; but I am entirely willing to abide the action of the Union Convention at Baltimore. If Mr. Lincoln should be nominated, however, my hearty support. Very truly yours, JOHN SHERMAN.

Returns of the Louisiana Election.
 The following recapitulation of the vote cast at the election in Louisiana is published in The New-Orleans Era of the 23th ult.:

Carrollton	245	41	17
Port Hudson	13	65	86
Donaldsonville	313	55	108
Algiers	29	99	108
Franklin	308	—	21
Port Macomb	6	17	7
Lafourche Crossing	6	17	7
Port Jackson	166	—	10
Buras Settlement	103	—	8
Madisonville	103	—	21
Irishboro	59	—	5
Lafourche Parish	31	26	5
Lafourche Parish (1st Dist.)	15	48	195
Napoleonville	13	59	10
Woodville	19	37	7
Route Station	—	—	24
Cotton & Cotton Plant	107	—	—
Total	5,217	1,869	1,879